

Statement on the Proposed United States-Malaysia Free Trade Agreement *March 8, 2006*

The United States and Malaysia share strong trade and investment ties and a commitment to generating prosperity through openness, democracy, and freedom. Today we seek to further strengthen the ties between our two countries by launching negotiations on a comprehensive U.S.-Malaysia Free Trade Agreement.

Once completed, a free trade agreement with Malaysia will generate significant commercial, economic, political, and strategic

benefits to both countries. It will improve our ties with the Southeast Asia region and strengthen our engagement in Asia. Malaysia is our tenth-largest trading partner, and the United States is Malaysia's second-largest source of imports. A U.S.-Malaysia Free Trade Agreement will advance our commitment to opening markets around the world and expanding opportunities for America's farmers, ranchers, workers, and businesses.

Remarks Following a Meeting on Faith-Based and Community Initiatives *March 9, 2006*

We just had a very interesting dialog here. I want to thank members of the faith community, the community-based action community, the corporate community, the foundation community for joining in a dialog about how we can continue to foster the good works of millions of our fellow citizens who deeply care about the future of our country and the plight of their fellow citizen.

One of the things that always strengthens my belief in our future is my understanding of how many acts of kindness take place on a daily basis in the United States, and it doesn't require any government edict or

government law. People really care about the future of our country; millions of our citizens weep when they know somebody hurts. But nevertheless, there still needs to be focused efforts on encouraging more giving of money and time.

So I want to thank you all very much for joining us. Appreciate your being social entrepreneurs. I thank you for really strengthening the heart of the United States of America. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:49 a.m. at the Washington Hilton Hotel.

Remarks at the White House National Conference on Faith-Based and Community Initiatives *March 9, 2006*

Thanks for coming. Appreciate you being here. Thanks for the warm welcome. This is the second White House National Conference on Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, and I appreciate your attend-

ance. I take this conference very seriously, and I'm glad you do as well.

The last conference was in June of 2004. Some of you were probably wondering whether I'd be back for this conference.